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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 07/13/09

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, July 10, 11

July 13, 2009

10th Left Leonardo da Vinci International Airport by chartered JAL plane.

11th

18:11 Arrived at Haneda Airport.

18:52 Entered his name in the register book to report his return home.

19:06 Arrived at the official residence. Then met with Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura. Then met with Justice Minister Mori and LDP Administrative Reform Promotion Headquarters chief Chuma.

21:50 Met with Lower House member Ryota Takeda.

Prime Minister's schedule, 12

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

July 13, 2009

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10:02 Took a walk around the official residence and spent the afternoon there.

4) DPJ wins landslide victory in Tokyo election becoming no. 1 party in municipal assembly

YOMIURI (Top play) (Excerpts)

July 13, 2009

The Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election took place yesterday. As a result, of the 127 seats up for grabs, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won 54 seats and became the largest party in the Tokyo Assembly, easily eclipsing the 35 seats it had won in the previous election. Meanwhile, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) garnered only 38 seats, a record low. The LDP and New Komeito, which were ruling parties backing Gov. Ishihara, failed to maintain a majority of 64 seats, their victory-or-defeat line. Prime Minister and LDP President Taro Aso, who used to say that the Tokyo election has no direct bearing on national politics, has decided to dissolve the House of Representatives this week with the aim of containing the drive in the LDP to unseat Aso. Protests and maneuvering in the party are likely to intensify.

Based on the results of the Tokyo poll, Aso decided to dissolve the Lower House at an early time and conveyed his decision to LDP executive yesterday. He is set to dissolve the chamber as early as July 14. The poor showing in the Tokyo election followed LDP defeats in the Shizuoka gubernatorial election and the Nara mayoralty race. Aso has made the decision in the belief that delaying dissolution would only lead to more calls from within the party to him to step down. There is already considerable pressure from within the LDP for Aso to resign to take responsibility for a series of election defeats, and the situation within the ruling bloc has grown increasingly tense.

Yesterday, Aso received reports on the metropolitan assembly election at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) and spoke with LDP heavyweights over the phone. It is believed that he asked for their understanding and cooperation over the issue of dissolving the Lower House. Aso intends to hold talks with New Komeito Representative Akihiro Ota as early as today. Last night, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura held talks with LDP Secretary General Hiroyuki Hosoda at a Tokyo hotel where they agreed that the Prime Minister is not responsible for the outcome of the Tokyo election and the question of dissolving the Lower House must be left entirely to the Prime Minister. If the Lower House is dissolved within his week, the general election is likely to be held on Aug.

18.

Number of seats won by each party

(Total of 127 seats)

Total	Incumbent	Former	New	Pre-election
strength	Previous	election	winners	Candidates

DPJ 54 31 1 22 34 35 58
LDP 38 33 1 4 48 48 58
Komeito 23 19 -- 4 22 23 23
JCP 8 6 -- 2 13 13 40
NET 2 1 -- 1 4 3 5

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SDP 0 -- -- 0 0 0 2
Other parties 0 0 -- 0 1 1 13
Independents 2 1 -- 1 3 4 22
Total 127 91 2 34 125 127 221

(2 vacancies); NET = Tokyo Seikatsusha Network

5) Prime Minister Aso likely to dissolve Lower House tomorrow

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
July 13, 2009

Prime Minister Taro Aso decided yesterday to dissolve the House of Representatives on July 14 at the earliest with an eye on a general election for the Lower House in early August. In the wake of the ruling parties' defeat in Sunday's Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, moves to oust Aso will certainly gain momentum, but Aso has no intention to step down from his post as prime minister. He intends to ask for the people's vote of confidence on his economic and foreign policies.

However, there is a possibility that Aso will be forced to quit his post if many of his cabinet ministers oppose dissolution and the New Komeito, the junior coalition partner of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), launches moves to leave the ruling coalition framework.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura last evening telephoned heads of the LDP factions and informed them of Aso's decision to dissolve the Lower House. Kawamura also asked each of them for their views on the matter. Aso plans to kick off an official campaign for the Lower House election on July 28 and conduct the election on Aug. 9. However, since Aug. 9 marks the anniversary of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki, he is also considering starting the official campaign on July 27 and holding the election on Aug. 8.

The main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is set to submit a no-confidence motion against the Aso cabinet to the Lower House, probably on July 14 at the earliest. The DPJ, however, might submit it after July 17, following the Emperor's return home from his overseas trip. Otherwise, the Crown Prince will have to act on behalf of the Emperor.

Aso decided on an early dissolution while he was attending the Group of Eight (G-8) summit (L'Aquila) in Italy. On the evening of July 11 immediately returning home, he told junior lawmakers, whom he trusts in: "I don't mind being criticized, but it is regrettable that the LDP is regarded as being makeshift. I am determined (to fight in the general election) not only for myself but also for the entire LDP," criticizing the moves to move up an LDP presidential election as "makeshift."

Aso believes that if the LDP changes again its president, the public will abandon it. He has apparently decided that he must fulfill his duty as the LDP president elected last September.

Meanwhile, it is certain that calls for a general meeting of all LDP lawmakers after July will become stronger. Article 35 of the LDP rules stipulates that if one-third (128) of the LDP legislators sign, a general meeting must be held within a week. The possibility is strong that a decision will be made to accelerate the schedule for the presidential race at the general meeting.

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6) Voter turnout rises 10 points to 54 PERCENT in Tokyo election

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Abridged)
July 13, 2009

The voter turnout in yesterday's election for the Tokyo metropolitan assembly was 54.49 PERCENT , up 10.50 points from the last Tokyo metropolitan assembly election in 2005, when it was the second lowest. The figure is the second highest next to that in 1989 (58.74 PERCENT) when the now-defunct Japan Socialist Party made great strides and a number of female candidates were elected to the metropolitan assembly. In April and afterward, candidates affiliated with the Liberal Democratic Party and those affiliated with the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) contended in the nation's five major local elections, including the mayoral race in Nagoya City. In those local elections, the voter turnout went up. In four of those elections, DPJ-affiliated candidates were elected. This time as well, the high turnout of voters apparently led to the DPJ's prevailing.

7) Exit poll: LDP backers also vote for DPJ candidates

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Abridged)
July 13, 2009

In yesterday's election for the Tokyo metropolitan assembly, the Tokyo Shimbun conducted an exit poll of voters at 26 polling stations and obtained answers from a total of 1,089 voters about which political party's candidate they voted for. In the exit poll, 51.6 PERCENT answered that they had voted for candidates who ran from the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto). The Liberal Democratic Party was low at 23.6 PERCENT , followed by the Japanese Communist Party at 11.4 PERCENT , the New Komeito party at 8.5 PERCENT , and the Seikatsusha Net party at 1.3 PERCENT . The DPJ garnered votes not only from floating voters but also from LDP supporters. The DPJ gained crossover support in a tailwind to national politics.

In the breakdown of those polled, floating voters with no particular party affiliation accounted for 24.2 PERCENT . Among them, 53.6 PERCENT cast their votes for the DPJ, with 17.5 PERCENT voting for the LDP. In the exit poll of voters in the last Tokyo metropolitan assembly election in 2005, the DPJ scored 33 PERCENT , followed by the JCP at 21.4 PERCENT . This time, however, the JCP was at 14.4 PERCENT . This shows that non-LDP floating voters cast their votes for the DPJ rather than the JCP.

In the exit poll, voters were also asked what they had factored in when voting. In the breakdown of their answers, "political party or group" topped all other answers at 37.6 PERCENT , followed by "policy" at 26.2 PERCENT , and "personality" at 20.9 PERCENT . This can be taken to reflect the campaign battle of political parties themselves rather than their candidates as a prelude to the next election for the House of Representatives.

Among all those polled as well, those who gave first consideration "political party or group" accounted for 41.3 PERCENT .

In addition, respondents were also asked which political party they supported. In the breakdown of their answers, the LDP stood at 28.5 PERCENT , with the DPJ at 31.9 PERCENT . The gap was 3.4 points.

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However, 29.4 PERCENT of LDP supporters cast their votes for the DPJ. Among those LDP voters, the LDP was at 59 PERCENT . This resulted in pushing up the DPJ. The DPJ secured votes from 88.2 PERCENT of its supporters.

Respondents were further asked which political party they would vote for in the next election for the House of Representatives, which is said to be an election to choose political parties for government. In this popularity ranking of political parties for proportional representation, the DPJ topped all other parties at 53.4 PERCENT , with the LDP at 22.3 PERCENT , the New Komeito at 7 PERCENT , and the JCP at 6.2 PERCENT . The voter inclination to the DPJ was stronger than the voting behavior in the metropolitan assembly election this time.

The DPJ was chosen by 56.7 PERCENT of floating voters, 26.5 PERCENT of LDP supporters, and 15.3 PERCENT of JCP supporters.

8) Many veteran LDP Tokyo assemblymen lose their seats in single-seat constituencies

SANKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
July 13, 2009

In yesterday's Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) suffered a historic defeat partly because many of its candidates were defeated in single seat-constituencies where one-on-one battles took place with Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) candidates. In fact, out of seven single-seat constituencies, only one LDP candidate won a seat. The LDP had five assemblymen representing five single-seat constituencies before the election.

Haruyasu Tateishi, 67, who sought his eighth term in Chuo Ward, was defeated by a 55-year-old DPJ newcomer. It was a symbolic event. In Chiyoda Ward, Shigeru Uchida, 70, who sought his seventh term, was defeated by a 26-year-old DPJ newcomer, putting an end to the seat held for half a century by the LDP. Uchida, who serves as the secretary general of the LDP Tokyo chapter, was a strongman. In Ome, DPJ candidate Yoko Yamashita, 50, a former announcer, beat the LDP's Arinobu Nomura, 68, who sought his fifth term. In these constituencies, the DPJ candidates defeated the strong incumbent LDP candidates after head-on clashes, although the Japan Communist Party, too, had its candidates.

In Akishima, LDP-backed newcomer Genzaburo Sugisaki, 59, was beaten by Yuko Hoshi 51, also a novice endorsed by the DPJ, the Social Democratic Party, and the People's New Party. In Musashino, DPJ incumbent Reiko Matsushita, 38, prevented Yasuhiro Omino, 46, from achieving his comeback. In Koganei, Masato Takagi, 50, was also lost to JDP incumbent Shinichiro Nishioka, 40. Chuichi Kawashima, 62, an incumbent in the island area, was the only one who has successfully kept his single-seat.

Severe results in the single-seat constituencies seem to be a sign of an uphill battle for LDP in the upcoming Lower House election.

9) DPJ confident it will take reins of government

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Almost full)
July 13, 2009

Now that the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has secured the

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position of the leading party in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, it is confident that it can realize a power shift in the next Lower House election. Taking advantage of its victory in the Tokyo election, the party will go on the offensive with the aim of bringing about Lower House dissolution, using a no-confidence motion against the Aso cabinet and a censure motion against the prime minister, which it is expected to submit to the Lower and Upper Houses respectively as early as the 13th.

The DPJ has achieved consecutive victories in major local elections, such as Nagoya, Saitama, and Chiba (government ordinance cities) mayoral elections, and the Shizuoka gubernatorial election on the 5th. It also won the Nara mayoral election.

In an effort to keep up the momentum, party executives, such as President Yukio Hatoyama, Deputy President Naoto Kan and Secretary General Katsuya Okada, energetically toured closely-contested constituencies.

Hatoyama tried to attract support, linking a victory in the Tokyo election to the realization of a change in government, noting, "In order to achieve a change in administration, we must first gain the control of the metropolitan government."

In the previous 2005 Lower House election, the DPJ secured only one victory among 25 single-seat constituencies in Tokyo. It lost many

seats in urban areas, such as Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Osaka, which led to a crushing defeat.

Since restoring party strength in urban areas has been its major challenge in connection with winning the Lower House election, the party has now secured a foothold with the landslide victory in the Tokyo election.

Hatoyama had to win the Tokyo election for his own sake as well. The Tokyo election took place while he was being pursued by the ruling camp over the revelation of a false political fund donations statement involving him. There was a scene where he gave explanations on the matter during a campaign speech. It was imperative for him to give the impression that the DPJ's strength is continuing to grow in order to shrug off the negative impact of this problem as well.

The outcome of the Tokyo election has given impetus to the realization of a shift in power. Deputy President Naoto Kan appearing at the party headquarters on the evening of the 12th called on Prime Minister Aso to dissolve the Lower House quickly, noting: "This is the result of confidence in the DPJ being boosted. Dissolving the Diet at this point in time is the prime minister's duty to his people.

10) Tokyo assembly election seen as no confidence vote against Gov. Ishihara's administration; Pending issues face severe situation

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
July 13, 2009

Yoshimi Ishikawa, city news reporter

Under the slogan of "changing the government starting in Tokyo," the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has won a landslide victory in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election. The Tokyo assembly reflects

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accurately the alignment of forces in national politics in the run-up to the upcoming House of Representatives election. The political upheaval resulting from the failure of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and New Komeito -- parties backing Governor Shintaro Ishihara -- to win a majority was also a harsh verdict on Ishihara's administration.

The DPJ put forward two "no's" as the point of contention with the governor and the ruling parties in the election campaign. It opposed injecting more funds to rescue ShinGinko Tokyo, a failed bank that has become Ishihara's Achilles heel, and the controversial relocation of the Tsukiji fish market to an (environmentally polluted) site that used to be a gas factory.

The opposition forces led by the DPJ are in agreement about urging the early pull out of the Tokyo government from ShinGinko Tokyo and reconsidering keeping the Tsukiji market where it is on the relocation issue.

The situation is such that these pending issues, which will be the key to predicting the fate of the Ishihara administration, will face rough sailing, including possible reviews.

In yesterday's election, the LDP lost its seats to the DPJ one by one in the single-seat districts, which symbolized the confrontation between the ruling parties and the opposition.

Ishihara, who has exercised strong leadership by facing up to the national government, may even see his free hand restrained, after losing the support of a stable majority in the assembly and now having to work with minority ruling parties.

Ishihara, who has announced his retirement after serving out his present term, has about two years left in office. Tokyo's bid to host the Olympic Games, which Ishihara is putting utmost effort into, will be decided in October when the host city is decided. The outcome may affect Ishihara's retirement, and moves to succeed him may gather momentum.

11) DPJ makes great strides in Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election:
Plans to submit no-confidence motion today

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
July 13, 2009

Having become the largest party for the first time in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election on July 12, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is determined to strengthen its offensive against the ruling parties this week with an eye on the next Lower House Election, in which the party is aiming to take the reins of government. It intends to submit on the 13th a no-confidence motion against the cabinet to the Lower House and a censure motion against the prime minister to the Upper House. Other opposition parties are expected to join step with the DPJ in forcing Prime Minister Taro Aso to dissolve the Lower House at an early date for a snap election. Behind the DPJ's call for early Lower House dissolution appears to be the scenario that it wants to avoid of a counterattack by the ruling parties over such issues as the false statement of political fund donations involving President Yukio Hatoyama.

Promoting change in administration as goal

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Since the launch of the Hatoyama leadership, the DPJ has achieved consecutive victories in major local elections, such as Saitama and Chiba mayoral elections and the Shizuoka gubernatorial election. In a bid to carry this momentum to the upcoming Lower House election, the DPJ fought the Metropolitan Assembly election by promoting a change in administration as its goal. Meeting the press at the party headquarters after the general voting trend was determined, Secretary General Katsuya Okada made a victory statement, saying: "The citizens of Tokyo have said 'no' to the forgoing of Lower House dissolution and the disarray in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The result will encourage us in the run-up to the upcoming general election."

The DPJ's basic strategy is to confront Prime Minister Aso, who is suffering from sluggish support rates for his cabinet. The DPJ-sponsored no-confidence motion against Aso will likely be voted down with a majority vote by the ruling parties. If Aso wins the vote of confidence, the move to oust him, which is growing in the LDP, will lose steam because of the party's crushing defeat in the Tokyo election, enabling Aso to dissolve the Lower House at his own initiative. Okada checked the move to oust Aso, saying: "The LDP has been changing its public faces one after another. They are now trying to push (Mr. Aso) out of office less than a year since he took office."

Hatoyama, Okada, and Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa will confer on the no-confidence and censure motions after a roll call on the bill amending the Organ Transplant Law is over at an Upper House plenary session on the afternoon of the 13th. They will hold meetings with secretaries general and chairmen of the Diet Affairs Committees of the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party and call on them to jointly submit those motions. The Japanese Communist Party is also expected to support the motions.

There is apparently another reason that the DPJ is seeking quick Lower House dissolution. The ruling parties are strengthening the pursuit of Hatoyama over his political fund problem. The Lower House Special Committee on Political Ethics and the Revision of the Offices Election Law has been repeatedly calling on Hatoyama to give unsworn testimony. If Lower House dissolution is put off to a later date, the favorable mood for the DPJ following its landslide victory in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election could change. If the LDP presidential election takes place right before the next Lower House election, it is bound to become the best opportunity for the ruling parties to attack the DPJ.

12) Amended organ transplant law to pass Diet today; other bills may be scrapped due to impact of vote of no confidence on Diet schedule

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
July 13, 2009

The deliberation of key legislations at the extended Diet session will reach a critical stage early this week. The House of Councillors is expected to pass the amendment to the organ transplant law on July 13, after which the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is boycotting the deliberation of other bills, so it is now uncertain whether the special measures law to facilitate cargo inspection on ships going in and out of North Korea and other important bills can be enacted.

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Prime Minister Taro Aso, who just returned from the G-8 L'Aquila Summit, asked Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura at his official residential quarters on the evening of July 11: "What is going to happen to the amended organ transplant law?"

This is because by convention, if the House of Representatives is dissolved, bills being deliberated in the Diet will all be scrapped, and it is widely believed that if Aso dissolves the Diet before the organ transplant law is passed, there will be a strong public opinion backlash, especially from the patients' groups. This means that the prime minister's exercise of his power of dissolution may be restrained.

Of the 69 bills submitted by the government to the current Diet session, 62 or around 90 percent have been enacted. All 14 treaties have also been approved. There are only a handful of important bills, including the cargo inspection law and bills related to national civil service reform, left to be deliberated. However, the DPJ is poised to boycott Diet business, except for the organ transplant law, after it submits a motion of no confidence on the Diet on July 13. Therefore, it will be difficult to pass the remaining laws in the current session.

The ruling parties plan to pass the cargo inspection law in the Lower House on July 14, but even if they railroad the bill through the Lower House, it will be hard to predict when the Upper House will deliberate on the bill. Even the bills relating to civil service reform, on which the ruling parties and the DPJ had agreed to discuss revisions, may now be scrapped as well.

13) JCP, SDP fear sinking into insignificance

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Abridged slightly)
July 13, 2009

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) made a large leap in yesterday's Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly Election. Given the situation, the Japan Communist Party (JCP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the People's New Party (PNP) are concerned that the DPJ might become a sole winner in the upcoming House of Representatives election, overshadowing them all.

JCP Chairman Kazuo Shii indicated in a press conference last night that his party will demonstrate a clear difference with the DPJ, saying: "Logic introduced in the Tokyo poll to choose between the LDP and the DPJ worked against us. We will work hard to drive home our politics ahead of the next Lower House election."

SDP Secretary General Yasumasa Shigeno in a press conference said: "A large part of anti-LDP votes flew into the DPJ. The DPJ clearly lacks something, and we are going to say what must be said." He thus indicated that the SDP would exert strong influence in a coalition government that is likely to be launched by opposition parties after the next Lower House election.

Meanwhile, PNP Secretary General Hisaoki Kamei told a press conference: "There is a possibility that the DPJ will monopolize votes in the proportional representation segment. We must work hard to demonstrate our presence."

14) DPJ watering down anti-U.S. color in security policies in draft manifesto, discarding review of host nation support

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
July 12, 2009

Nariyuki Tanaka

The entries on foreign and security policies in the "2009 policy index," which will serve as the first draft of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) manifesto (campaign pledges) for the forthcoming House of Representatives election, were revealed on July 11. In relation to the Japan-U.S. alliance, entries on policy reviews toward reducing the burden imposed by U.S. military bases in Japan and a review of host nation support for U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) (the so-called sympathy budget), two items that were included in the policy index as of last fall, have been discarded. It is believed that this was in response to objections from the U.S. side. With the increasing probability of a change of administration, the DPJ has watered down its confrontational stance toward the U.S. The party is currently formulating its official manifesto based on the policy index and will publish the document after the dissolution of the Diet.

In the 2008 policy index, the DPJ called for a "reconsideration of the role of the U.S. forces in Asia and the Pacific and the role of U.S. military bases in Japan in order to reduce the burden imposed by the bases" under its policy goal of "establishing a Japan-U.S. alliance for the new era." It wanted to "work on a drastic revision of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and continuously examine Japan's share in the cost of USFJ realignment, the implementation of the sympathy budget, and so on."

However, the 2009 policy index only talks about "working on SOFA revision while also continuing to review USFJ realignment and the U.S. military bases." Words such as "drastic" and "continuously examine" were removed.

15) Gov't to pay 34.6 billion yen to U.S. for Guam relocation

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged)
July 12, 2009

The government has decided to make its first disbursement of 336 million dollars (approx. 34.6 billion yen) to the United States in fiscal 2009 to share the cost of relocating U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, and the government exchanged notes yesterday to that effect with the U.S. government. This is a step to follow up the Diet's approval in May of the Guam relocation pact with the United States that sets the ceiling of Japan's financial burden at 2.8 billion dollars. The government will continue its funding next year and afterward.

However, moving Okinawa-based U.S. Marines to Guam is contingent on "specific progress" in the relocation of the U.S. military's Futenma airfield in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, to a location in the prefecture. The Guam relocation therefore may not be translated into reality by 2014 as stipulated in the pact. In that case, base infrastructure will be constructed on Guam first with Japan's cooperation.

According to the Foreign Ministry, Japan's share of the burden this time is broken down into 320.9 million dollars for on-base infrastructure construction, including land development for billets,

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and 15.1 million dollars for designing billets and other facilities. These projects are expected to be started shortly, the Foreign Ministry says.

The U.S. Defense Department has also earmarked 378 million dollars in its defense budget for fiscal 2010 (October 2009 through September 2010) as its first full-fledged spending for the Guam relocation. The Pentagon plans to accelerate Guam's preparation for

the relocation of Marines from Okinawa.

Concerning Futenma relocation, Okinawa Prefecture has strongly called for the construction site of its alternative facility to be moved offshore. The Japanese and U.S. governments are both expressing reservations about this offshore site.

16) Resumption of Six-Party Talks: Differences in opinion on excluding North Korea - Japan, U.S., ROK mulling "five-party talks"; China cautious about open conflict

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
July 13, 2009

Differences in opinion among the concerned countries have emerged over how to resume the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear issue. While Japan, the U.S., and the ROK are looking for a breakthrough by holding five-party talks, China remains cautious on this idea due to its concerns about isolating the DPRK. The foreign ministers of the six nations will gather at the ASEAN Regional Forum in late July, but it remains uncertain whether they can find a way to hold dialogue.

At his meeting with Akitaka Saiki, director general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), on the evening of July 9, PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei expressed doubts about the five-party talks idea that Japan, the U.S., and the ROK are looking at: "It will not be helpful for the five nations to gather and criticize North Korea." Saiki persisted in persuading him, noting that "the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution has already criticized (the DPRK)," but Wu would not consent to holding the talks.

The idea of holding five-party talks was first suggested by ROK President Lee Myung Bak. This is meant to verify the implementation of the sanctions under UNSC Resolution 1874, demonstrate a strong determination toward denuclearization, and thus apply pressure on the DPRK. However, there has been persistent criticism that, "It is meaningless to make any decisions without DPRK participation." (senior MOFA official)

The Japanese and U.S. governments take a slightly more neutral position than the ROK, regarding the five-party talks as a means to resume the Six-Party Talks. A senior government official asserted, "It is better to meet than not to meet. However, it will not do to engage in five-party talks alone," revealing a subtle difference from the ROK position.

On the other hand, China has argued that the five-party talks will only serve to define the paradigm of confrontation between the DPRK and the five other countries, and this would only give North Korea an excuse not to return to the Six-Party Talks. It favors the approach of looking for an opening to hold dialogue without provoking the DPRK.

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The ASEAN Regional Forum opening in Thailand on July 23 is one of the few international meetings attended by the DPRK. Japan, the U.S., the ROK think that this will be an opportunity for the foreign ministers of the five nations to exchange views on resuming the Six-Party Talks. China is expected to indicate its response after Wu completes his visit of the four other Six-Party Talks participants. A senior MOFA official says: "Right now, no clever solution is in sight."

17) Former Internal Affairs Minister Hatoyama in speech: "Suicides are related to DNA"

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Except)
July 13, 2009

Former Minister of Internal Affairs and Communication Kunio Hatoyama of the Liberal Democratic Party, in a speech he gave in his home district in Fukuoka Prefecture on July 12, gave his views on a number of cases of suicides of parents and their children, saying,

"It has been said that when one commits suicide, there is some kind of DNA at work."

With suicides in Japan now exceeding an annual 30,000 persons, it has become a social challenge to deal with preventing that act. But his statement can only lead to creating the erroneous view that suicide has something to do with heredity.

18) Simple possession of child pornography to be banned, as ruling parties and DPJ reach unified view on amendment to law

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Excerpt)
July 13, 2009

It was revealed as of yesterday that a draft revision of a bill to strengthen measures to stop the spread of child pornography brings together the bill proposed by the ruling parties and the bill by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). On the key point of issue, the question of simple possession of child pornography, photos or film, collected by individuals, agreement between the two camps has been reached. However, there is a difference in views in the ruling camp about the case of such material possessed prior to the new law going into effect, and consideration is still being as to whether to make such possession a punishable offense. Final coordination is now going on. The three parties aim at passage of the amended law this session, but since the DPJ has decided to file a no-confidence motion on July 13, and there is a rumor that the Lower House would then be dissolved, it is unknown whether the bill will be passed on time.

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